

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Fire Management on CRP

Bozeman, MT – With the hot, dry weather Montana faces during July and August, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is reminding Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract holders their responsibility for fire management on CRP acreage.

Firebreaks can either be a strip of bare land or a vegetative cover that retards fire. Grazing is not allowed as an option to maintain firebreaks. Bare ground firebreaks shall be only allowed in high risk areas such as transportation corridors, rural communities, and adjacent farmsteads. If bare ground firebreaks are used, adequate erosion control treatments must be installed and maintained. Bare ground strips may serve as sites for the establishment of weeds. As required for the vegetative cover, weeds must also be controlled on bare ground strips. Lack of weed control measure could result in noncompliance of CRP provisions and assessment of payment reduction or termination of the affected acreage. It is the responsibility of the CRP contract holder to maintain the firebreaks.

CRP contract holders must acquire a modification to their current CRP contract that includes fire management. Contact your local FSA office for further requirements and required fire management specifications.

For information regarding other programs administered by FSA, logon to the Montana FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> or by visiting your local USDA Service Center.